If a Tayal wife is mistreated by her husband's family [35] she can go home to her parents. But this is a very serious act, for it entails not only a divorce, but a rupture between the two families. It is a case of vendetta, and the only way of avoiding a reprisal on the part of the wife's family is by paying an indemnity. Usually an unhappy wife just asks a third person to intervene, it may be the village chief, or some one else. If the husband is at fault, he is scolded. If the husband is guilty of adultery, the wife has the right to leave the house, and the husband cannot ask her family to return the sum that he paid in order to marry her. If the wife is guilty, her spouse has the right to repudiate her and to ask for the restoration of this sum. When the divorce proceedings are over, each family must kill a pig and distribute the pieces among the other families in the village. A Tayal woman who has been repudiated never goes back to her family; she has to marry again or live alone.

16: Müller--230 [9] U-3 (no date) 1910 Formosan Aborigines
116, 593, 627

It is a tradition in native family life that the murder of a parent must be revenged (blood vengeance).

18: Kakyo--70 [4] E-2 (no date) 1899 Formosan Aborigines
116, 593, 627, 858

Love between parents and children among the Formosan savages is based above all on the principle that rules in general the relations between young and old; to this is added parental love, which created a strong bond between parents and children. Although, among savages, the ethical love of children is not prominent as compared with natural love, nevertheless the parents love and care for their children, while the children look on it as their sacred duty, if father or mother is killed, for example, to take revenge. This is enough to show that the ethical love of children is being developed.

22: Wiedfeldt--40 [3] F-5 (1913) 1914 Formosan Aborigines
116, 183, 627, 684 Atayal

An Atayal, unlike a modern cuckold, can not disregard this offence, but the clan, with its strict conception of marriage, will demand that the offence be punished, and if need be, will intervene in his place. Their simple and consistent legal principles are part of the flesh and blood of every Atayal, and are apparently more closely observed and less frequently violated than the individual regulations which are turned out by our parliamentary paragraph factories, which are a matter of concern to virtually only the parties interested for the moment. The penal law, civil law, and legal procedure of the Atayals, if I may be permitted to use these terms for the sake of brevity, could be put into the form of laws, if it were worth the trouble, and if, in so doing, their most characteristic features would not be lost. For this entire legal system consists of nothing but basic principles, from which one may safely deduce the necessary procedure for every individual case.

25: Plaut--41 [5] U-4 (no date) 1903 Formosan Aborigines
116, 627, 674, 685

Theft is unknown among some of the tribes. Among others it is very rare, and it is usually handled in such a way that the thief is required to restore the stolen property, or its equivalent, and to pay an additional fine.

25: Plaut--42 U-4 (no date) 1903 Formosan Aborigines
116, 578, 582, 627

If a person has made some slanderous remark, he is forced to retract it and to ask for pardon. If he refuses to do that, he has to pay a fine to the insulted party.

If two men love the same girl and neither one is willing to give her up, there is usually no solution but for them to fight until one dies, and the other one has the bride.

37: Steere--307 [1] S-3 (1873-74?) 1875 Formosan Aborigines
116, 622, 627, 553 Sek-hoan

"There are still some remains of their ancient tribal government among them, but the lineal chiefs or head men seem to have purchased small mandarinships, and thus unite the Chinese authority with that inherited. Justice is generally administered as among the Chinese by the elders and head men of the village. They have a curious custom of naming their children after the different kinds of trees in the forests."